

# Bible Study on Psalms

## Wisdom Psalms – Our Father Knows Best

### Answers

#### Psalm 1

1. “Blessed” here refers to the ultimate well-being and distinctive joy of those who share in the salvation of the kingdom of God. It means more than “happy,” because happiness is an emotion often dependent on outward circumstances
2. The three verbs, “walk,” “stand,” and “sit,” warn Christians against letting ungodly influences gradually penetrate in their lives. Don’t walk according to the advice of the wicked, that is, don’t begin to accept their values. Don’t stand in the way of sinners, that is, don’t hang around with them and join in their sinful actions. Don’t sit with the mockers, that is don’t make yourself at home with them. Don’t join them in their impenitent way of life and their bold defiance of God. Don’t become one of them.
3. Ephesians tells us to not let evil influences get a foot into our door. Romans tells us to not conform to an outward molding to fit a pattern. Believers should not be molded by the ways of this world. Instead we can be transformed by God’s Word.
4. Living in a broken world, we will have evil all around us. Trying to “not” do something can be difficult and frustrating. Instead verse 2 suggests getting to deep into doing something positive will give us better chance of avoiding evil.
5. You may feel that meditation is something only monks and mystics can do. So let me ask, do you know how to worry? If you can worry, you can meditate. To meditate merely means to think about something over and over. Let it simmer in your mind. Reflect on it from different angles until it becomes part of you. (If you want to walk on Water, You’ve got to get out of the Boat – John Ortberg – p. 166)
6. We live here on planet earth, but our true citizenship is in heaven. We do not belong to the world system. In our Baptism we have renounced the world’s wisdom and Satan’s values.
7. In fact we can take verse 3 as a promise from God. Those who, by His grace guide their lives by His Word and thus avoid living out the “wisdom” of the wicked will experience great prosperity – true prosperity. This includes a rich worship life, peace during life’s storms and trials, the blessing of a conscience washed clean by the blood of Christ, the joy and hope of an eternal home in heaven when life on this earth ends.

Verse 6a assures us that the Lord watches over the plans and paths of godly men.

## Psalm 19

1. The skies declare God's glory. They show the work of God's hands. In verses 1-6 the psalmist direct us to God's creation.
2. The physical world around us displays God's infinite knowledge. It points to all-wise, all-powerful Creator.
3. Read verses 7-10. What does the psalmist say about each of the following:
  - a. Names for God's Word. Six names for God's Word found in these verses are: "fear," "statutes," "precepts," "commands," "fear," and "ordinances." The "fear of the Lord" (v. 9) seems an unusual name for God's Word. Usually we think of this term as referring to an attitude the Word produces in the believer. In verse 9 this term is used as a figure of speech for the Word itself.
  - b. Qualities of God's Word. Qualities of God's Word named in these verses are "perfect," "trustworthy," "right," "radiant," "pure," and "sure and altogether righteous."
4. Blessings the Word brings to believers include the fact that the Word "revives the soul," "makes the simple wise," "gives joy to the heart," and "gives light to the eyes. The Word "endures forever." It is "more precious than gold" and sweeter than honey."

## Psalm 49

1. Sooner or later, death swallows everyone, rich and poor alike. People tend to deny or overlook this fact, even though we know it intellectually, we fail to consider it in our day-to-day lifestyle. Therefore, it's healthy for us to be reminded, just as the psalmist does here.
2. No one can redeem the life of another or pay God the "ransom" owed. As verses 8b says, "no payment is ever enough." We cannot buy freedom from guilt. Only Jesus, by offering his life as the payment, could redeem us from the eternal, spiritual death sin and Satan bring.
3. Verses 14-15 point to God's promise of a resurrection. Note that resurrection is a reality for all people, both the righteous and the unrighteous. For the believer, this promise means that our bodies and souls will be reunited on the last day, and we will live with our Savior in heaven forever.
4. In verses 16-19 God warns us that earthly riches are essentially worthless. They seem great on earth, but their importance is so very fleeting. Those who depend on earthly riches will be forever disappointed.

## Psalm 112

1. The righteous have light and hope even in times of darkness and trouble; a steadfast and secure heart; a giving spirit; a concern for justice. The qualities of the righteous are patterned after the character of Jesus.
2. God's righteous children know that material wealth comes from God. we thank him for it and use his gifts wisely as good stewards. We also willingly share these gifts with those in need as a response to the love and goodness God has shown us.

After reading and rereading a psalm, ask yourself these questions. What words or phrases stick out to you? How do these words or phrases reveal the poet's purpose for the psalm? What effect does this psalm have on you as you meditate on it?